

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 574

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to honor Chancellor John G. Morgan on the occasion of his retirement from State government.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this body pay tribute to one of the most dedicated and gifted public servants this State has ever produced on the occasion of his retirement after nearly forty years of faithful service to the people of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, John Morgan held numerous positions in State government during those forty years and performed with distinction in each of them, but he will be especially remembered for his exemplary service as Comptroller of the Treasury, Deputy to the Governor, and finally, Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents; and

WHEREAS, a Tennessee native born in Nashville on January 4, 1952, John Morgan received his Bachelor of Science degree from Austin Peay State University in 1974 and did graduate work at Louisiana State University from 1974 to 1976; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan began his employment with the State of Tennessee as a research assistant for the Fiscal Review Committee for the General Assembly in 1976 before joining the Department of Finance and Administration in 1978; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, John Morgan accepted the position of administrative assistant to the State Treasurer, serving in that capacity until 1982, when he was named Assistant Director for Bond Finance in the Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury; and

WHEREAS, named Director of Bond Finance in 1983, Mr. Morgan served in that capacity until January of 1987, when he assumed the additional duties of Assistant to the Comptroller, serving in a dual capacity until October of 1987; and

WHEREAS, later that year, John Morgan left State government for the private sector when he was named Vice President, Director of Public Finance, for Third National Bank,

remaining there until February of 1989, when he was named Executive Assistant to the Comptroller of the Treasury; and

WHEREAS, serving as Executive Assistant to legendary Comptroller William Snodgrass, Mr. Morgan continued to build upon his sterling reputation as an extremely competent fiscal expert, an efficient administrator, and a truly dedicated State employee; and

WHEREAS, John Morgan was elected Comptroller of the Treasury in January 1999 by the 101st General Assembly and was subsequently reelected by the 102nd, 103rd, 104th, and 105th General Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, for more than twenty years, Mr. Morgan supported members of the House and Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committees in their deliberations and passage of budgets proposed by several governors and was an advisor to members of the General Assembly in a wide variety of areas, including State finance, education funding, and urban planning; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the State Building Commission, he was an advocate for wise use of capital funds, ensuring that capital projects were completed in accordance with the intent of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, as Comptroller, Mr. Morgan was an outspoken advocate for improvements in financial accountability, professionalism, and integrity in public service; he led the establishment of the Comptroller's Office of Research and Education Accountability and was instrumental in the creation of the Utility Management Review Board, as well as the Water and Wastewater Financing Board; and

WHEREAS, a strong advocate for public education, Mr. Morgan worked with the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee to research and compile the report titled "Education Crossroads," which summarized data on educational performance in Tennessee and its impact on our economic future; and

WHEREAS, in January 2009, he was appointed to the position of Deputy to Governor Phil Bredesen, in which position he coordinated the State's efforts in administering funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; and

WHEREAS, John Morgan was one of the chief architects of the Complete College Tennessee Act and played a key role in crafting a clear vision of higher education improvement during his term as Deputy to Governor Bredesen; and

WHEREAS, after being selected as Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) on October 1, 2010, John Morgan successfully guided the TBR system's efforts to address the demands of the Complete College Tennessee Act, a bold attempt to focus the State's energies and resources of its public higher education enterprise on meeting Tennessee's economic development needs; and

WHEREAS, during the past five years, Mr. Morgan's primary focus was on increasing post-secondary degree and certificate production and ultimately producing a better, more highly educated workforce; he created the TBR's Completion Delivery Unit to help the system and its institutions focus their attention on those efforts; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as Chancellor, the number of degrees awarded from the TBR's six universities rose approximately 3.6 percent, and the number of associate degrees and certificates awarded by community colleges increased more than forty percent; together, credentials awarded rose almost eighteen percent, placing TBR institutions well above the targeted goals for the State's Drive to 55 campaign to increase the number of Tennesseans with a post-secondary credential; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. Morgan's leadership, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded the TBR a two-million-dollar grant to support implementing system-wide efforts among all institutions to increase graduation rates; the TBR also received more than one million dollars from the Lumina Foundation to boost college degree completions; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan was invited to participate in both of President Obama's White House Summits on expanding college opportunity and was asked to serve in leadership roles with a number of national higher education organizations; and

WHEREAS, John Morgan served as Vice Chairman of the National Association of Higher Education System Heads and as an officer on the board of directors for Complete College America and held strategic roles with the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, including membership on the President's Council; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure, Mr. Morgan led the successful searches for new presidents at five of the TBR universities and seven community colleges across the State, and he also recommended new leaders for fourteen Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Morgan has also served on the Board of Directors of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce and the American Society of Public Administration; and

WHEREAS, through his work in education policy as Comptroller and Chancellor of TBR, John Morgan continued a family tradition and followed in the footsteps of his illustrious father, the late Dr. Joe Morgan, who served thirteen years as President of Austin Peay State University (APSU) and as Commissioner of Education; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as President of APSU, Dr. Morgan earned recognition as an educational innovator, and because of his honesty, integrity, and warm personality, he was highly respected by faculty and students alike; and

WHEREAS, as a result of his leadership and guidance, APSU experienced unprecedented growth during his tenure, and many capital projects were undertaken, including the University Center, which is named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Morgan recognized the importance of athletics in building a sense of community, and he was a leader in expanding APSU athletics and developing the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC), which inducted him into the OVC Hall of Fame as a member of the first class of honorees in 1977; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, John Morgan is fortunate to share both love and companionship with his wife, Donna Akin Morgan; their children: son Brian and his family, Sunshine and daughter Sia, and son Kevin and his family, Cristina and daughters Ava and Emiliana; and a beloved niece, Mia; and

WHEREAS, for nearly forty years, John Morgan devoted himself to the State of Tennessee and the best interests of her citizens, and we take great pleasure in recognizing his exemplary career built on honesty and integrity and devoted to maintaining the public's trust; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCURRING, that we hereby commend John G. Morgan for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee as Comptroller of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents on the occasion of his retirement from State government and extend to him our best wishes for much continued success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.